

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for receiving a program by a user location that is sent
2 from a content distributor, the method comprising:
3 receiving a first portion of the program at the user location;
4 storing the first portion of the program at the user location;
5 detecting a user request for the program after storage of the first portion;
6 and
7 receiving a second portion of the program in response to the detecting the
8 user request.

1 2. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 1, further comprising playing the first
3 portion.

1 3. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 2, wherein the playing the first portion
3 takes a first time that is equal to or greater than a second time associated with the
4 receiving the second portion.

1 4. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 1, wherein the detecting the user
3 request comprises:
4 receiving a wireless request from a remote control; and
5 processing the wireless request to determine a desired program.

1 5. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 1, wherein the program consists of the
3 first portion and the second portion.

1 6. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 1, wherein the user location comprises
3 a set top box.

1 7. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 1, wherein the storing the first portion

3 comprises storing the first portion on a mass storage device associated with a set top box
4 that is proximate to the user location.

1 8. The method for receiving a program by the user location that is
2 sent from the content distributor as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
3 determining a subset of programs from a linear schedule of programs;
4 dividing each of the subset of programs into a respective first portion and a
5 respective second portion; and
6 transmitting a plurality of respective first portions to the user location.

1 9. A method for transmitting a content program to a user location, the
2 method comprising:
3 determining a linear schedule of content programs wherein each content
4 program comprises a first segment and a second segment;
5 storing a set of second segments remotely from the user location;
6 transmitting a first set of first segments to the user location;
7 storing the first set of first segments at the user location; and
8 transmitting one of the second set of second segments to the user location
9 after a request by a user.

1 10. The method for transmitting the content program to the user
2 location as recited in claim 9, wherein at least one of the content programs comprises a
3 commercial.

1 11. The method for transmitting the content program to the user
2 location as recited in claim 9, further comprising playing the first segment.

1 12. The method for transmitting the content program to the user
2 location as recited in claim 11, wherein the playing the first segment takes a first time that
3 is equal to or greater than a second time associated with the transmitting the respective
4 second segment.

1 13. The method for transmitting the content program to the user
2 location as recited in claim 9, wherein the content program consists of the first segment
3 and the second segment.

1 14. A method for distributing a program from a content distributor to a
2 location, the method comprising:
3 transmitting a first portion of the program to the location;
4 storing the first portion of the program at the location;
5 waiting for a user request of the program;
6 detecting the user request for the program; and
7 transmitting a second portion of the program in response to the detecting
8 the user request.

1 15. The method for distributing the program from the content
2 distributor to the location as recited in claim 14, further comprising transmitting a
3 plurality of portions of the program in response to the detecting the user request wherein
4 the second portion is one of the plurality of portions.

1 16. The method for distributing the program from the content
2 distributor to the location as recited in claim 15, further comprising playing the first
3 portion before the second portion.

1 17. The method for distributing the program from the content
2 distributor to the location as recited in claim 16, wherein the playing the first portion
3 takes a first time that is equal to or greater than a second time associated with the
4 transmitting the plurality of portions.

1 18. The method for distributing the program from the content
2 distributor to the location as recited in claim 14, wherein the detecting the user request
3 comprises:
4 receiving a wireless request from a remote control; and
5 processing the wireless request to determine a desired program.

1 19. The method for distributing the program from the content
2 distributor to the location as recited in claim 14, further comprising:
3 downloading the first portion from a channel; and
4 downloading the second portion from the channel.

1 20. The method for distributing the program from the content
2 distributor to the location as recited in claim 14, further comprising:
3 determining a subset of programs from a linear schedule of programs;
4 dividing each of the subset of programs into a respective first portion and a
5 respective second portion; and
6 transmitting a plurality of respective first portions to the location.